

**DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



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STATE OF MONTANA

www.dphhs.mt.gov

Date: July 18, 2007

To: Vaccines for Children (VFC) Providers

From: Elizabeth LeLacheur, Vaccine Manager
Carolyn A. Parry, MPH, VFC/AFIX Coordinator
Montana Immunization Program

RE: Montana Immunization Program's Switch to the National Vaccine Distribution Center

As you may have heard, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) made the decision a few years ago that all federally purchased vaccine, which includes VFC vaccine, will be distributed through one national distribution center, rather than each state having their own distribution center. Beginning Monday, August 27, 2007, Montana will be switching over to the national distribution center. All non-frozen vaccine will be shipped by McKesson Specialty Distribution, located in Memphis, TN.

This memo and enclosed documents are to provide you with information and materials needed to assist Montana in making a smooth transition.

What Stays the Same

1. **Where You Send Vaccine Orders** - You will still place your orders through Home IV Pharmacy in Butte, MT.
2. **Reports Due** - Your Monthly Vaccine Report Form, due the 5th of each month, will still be sent to Home IV Pharmacy.
3. **Frozen Vaccine Shipments** - Varicella vaccine and, when available, MMRV will continue to be shipped directly from Merck to providers.
4. **Viable Vaccine that Cannot Be Used Before It Expires** – If a provider finds that they will be unable to use a vaccine before it expires, please contact Liz LeLacheur at 444-0277 to discuss options. Providers need to make this determination and contact Liz three months before the vaccine expires.

What Will Change

1. **Who is Shipping Vaccine** - Vaccine will be shipped from McKesson Specialty Distribution based in Memphis, TN. The vaccine will be shipped primarily by FedEx and United Parcel Service (UPS), although DHL may also be utilized. The vaccine will be packed to maintain proper temperatures for up to 72 hours. The first delivery attempt will occur within 48 hours of leaving McKesson. Please see the enclosed McKesson VFC Vaccine Shipments flyer for information on the shipments.

Providers are expected to open vaccine shipments, inspect vaccine, and store at appropriate temperatures within two hours of the shipment being delivered. If you find that the temperature monitor in the shipment does not say "OK," please store the vaccine in the refrigerator, keeping it separated from the other stock, and contact Home IV Pharmacy at 723-4099 or the Immunization Program at 444-5580 immediately. *Never reject a vaccine delivery or discard vaccine shipments.*

When the vaccine arrives, check to make sure the type of vaccine, number of doses, lot numbers, and expiration dates that are in the box match the packing slip. If there are any discrepancies, contact Home IV Pharmacy at 723-4099 immediately. Please keep a copy of the packing slip for your records.

These containers will come with postage paid labeling to facilitate their return via United Parcel Service (UPS). We recommend that you keep 1-2 boxes on hand to use for any wasted and expired vaccine returns and encourage you to return the remainder of the boxes to McKesson.

2. **Minimum Order of Vaccine** - Boxes of vaccine will not be able to be broken up, so minimum orders of vaccine will change. The Vaccine Order Form has been updated to reflect the new minimum amounts of vaccine that can be ordered. A copy, dated 7/2007, is enclosed.
3. **How Much Time for Vaccine to Arrive** - You will need to allow 10-15 business days, or two to three weeks, for your order to arrive. It may arrive sooner than this time frame. However, this will ensure that you do not run out of vaccine before your shipment arrives.

Vaccine orders will be processed by Home IV Pharmacy and transmitted to CDC on a daily basis (Monday - Friday). The orders will then be processed by McKesson within three to five shipping days. McKesson only ships Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Only in very special, unique circumstances will McKesson ship vaccine on other days of the week. Provider orders with unrestricted delivery information (able to accept vaccine shipments during normal business hours, Monday through Friday) will be processed immediately. Orders with special handling instructions or limited delivery times will be carefully reviewed to ensure that vaccine is delivered within the specified window of time.

4. **Phone Calls Will Not Be Made Prior to the Vaccine Being Shipped** – McKesson will not be making phone calls prior to shipping vaccine to make sure someone will be available to receive the vaccine. Please do not place orders when no one will be in the office to accept the order. If for some reason, you have placed an order and then will be out of the office or your office hours change, please contact Home IV Pharmacy at 723-4099 as soon as possible so that we can try to hold the shipment until a more suitable time.

Enclosed is a Vaccine Receiving Checklist to be posted at the receiving area. This is to list the primary and back up staff members for handling the order when it arrives. Please take some time to train your receiving staff on handling vaccine.

5. **How Often Vaccine Can Be Ordered** – Beginning in October, some providers will be switched to ordering quarterly or every other month, depending on the volume of vaccine used. Enclosed in this mailing are instructions for your new ordering schedule. We know that it may take some time to adjust to the new ordering schedule, please contact us at 444-5580 if you have any problems.
6. **Where Wasted and Expired Vaccine is Returned** - Beginning August 27, 2007, expired and wasted vaccine will be returned to McKesson. At no time should viable vaccine be returned to McKesson. Please contact Liz LeLacheur at 444-0277 if you have viable vaccine that cannot be used before it expires.

Providers should fill out the Wasted and Expired Vaccine Return Form and fax it to the Immunization Program at 444-2920 and keep a copy for your records. The original copy of the form should be enclosed in the box. Please write "Non-viable Vaccine enclosed" on the box. We recommend that providers return wasted and expired vaccine using one of the postage-paid containers that McKesson uses to ship the vaccine. If you do not have a McKesson shipping box available, please pack the wasted or expired vaccine into a box and return it to: McKesson Specialty Distribution, Attn: Eric Doss/Tommy McRae, 4853 Crumpler Road, Memphis, TN 38141.

7. **No VISs or MT Monthly Vaccine Reports Included in Shipments** - Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) forms will no longer be shipped with the vaccine. VISs can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm> or <http://www.immunize.org/vis/>. In addition, the Monthly Vaccine Report will no longer be shipped with the vaccine. Enclosed are two copies of the report. It will be posted on our website at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/PHSD/Immunization/immune-index.shtml>. If you are unable to download the information, we will be happy to provide you with a copy. Please contact our office at 444-5580.

What Providers need to do Now to Prepare for the Transition

1. **Order Enough Vaccine to Get the Practice through Mid-September** - All providers need to make sure you have enough VFC vaccine to get through mid-September. We are only being allowed a limited number of doses to be on hand at Home IV Pharmacy because we are nearing the switch over date. If we run out of a vaccine before the switch, we are concerned that there might be delays in getting vaccine to you. We know the next few months are very busy and we want to make sure you have enough vaccine. Please place your order by the end of July.
2. **Return Any Wasted or Expired VFC Vaccine Immediately** – If you have any wasted or expired VFC vaccine, including influenza vaccine now that it has expired, please return to Home IV Pharmacy immediately. We need to process this vaccine as soon as possible before the transition.
3. **2007-2008 Influenza Season VFC Vaccine Orders due August 1st** – A memo was sent out dated June 19, 2007 regarding the process for ordering VFC influenza orders this year. Please submit the 2007 Influenza Order Form to the Montana Immunization Program, PO Box 202951, Helena, MT 59620 or fax (406) 444-2920 by August 1, 2007.

We appreciate your patience and cooperation in working with us through the transition to centralized distribution. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Liz LeLacheur 444-0277 or Carolyn Parry 444-2675.

Enclosures: McKesson VFC Shipment Flyer
Vaccine Order Form (7/2007)
Vaccine Receiving Checklist
Vaccine Ordering Schedule
Wasted and Expired Vaccine Return Form
MT Monthly Vaccine Report (2 copies)
Immunization Resources